

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-3, 5, 7, and 9-12 will have been amended. Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance except for the enumerated formal matters.

Applicant further notes with appreciation the Examiner's consideration of the documents cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on September 25, 2003 by the return of the initialed and signed copy of the PTO-1449 Form accompanying the Information Disclosure Statement filed herein.

Applicant also notes that an Information Disclosure Statement was filed on January 7, 2004 (subsequent to the present action). Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider this information and return an initialed and signed copy of the PTO-1449 Form accompanying that Information Disclosure Statement with the Notice of Allowance.

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's acknowledgment of Applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 and the filing of the certified copies of the priority documents.

The Examiner has objected to claims 1-12 and specifically claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, and 12 for minor informalities. In response thereto, claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, and 12 have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. However, Applicant has reviewed claim 11 and does not find the informality noted by the Examiner in line 2. Applicant has

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reviewed claim 11 and respectfully submits that claim 11 is definite. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the claim objections have been overcome.

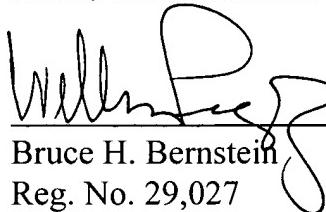
Additionally, minor amendments have been made to claims 1, 3, 9, 10, and 11 in order to make the language of these claims more consistent. These changes to the language of the claims render the same more self consistent, as well as more fully in compliance with U.S. syntax, idiom and grammar. These amendments do not change the scope of the claims but are merely cosmetic changes that give rise to no file wrapper estoppel.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the Examiner's objections and request to pass the present application on to allowance. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that he has now done so. The amendments to the claims made in this amendment have not been made to overcome the prior art, and thus, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this Response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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